



## Public Health Mōno-Gram

**Tom Boo, MD, FAAFP, DTM&H**

Public Health Officer

Phone: 760.924.1828

[tboo@mono.ca.gov](mailto:tboo@mono.ca.gov)

**Stuart Brown**

EOC Public Information Officer

Phone: 760.914.7110

[sbrown@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov](mailto:sbrown@townofmammothlakes.ca.gov)

[www.monohealth.com/Coronavirus](http://www.monohealth.com/Coronavirus)



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Mono County Health Department and Mammoth Hospital*

### **MORE POSITIVE CASES OF COVID-19 IN MONO COUNTY**

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March 26, 2020 – Mono County has received positive COVID-19 test results for two more people, and Tuolumne County has informed us of a person with a Merced address who acquired the infection in Mono County being treated in Tuolumne. Two of these three people are hospitalized and one is critically ill with respiratory failure. All are, or were recently, Mammoth area residents. One case was linked to a known case and had been identified as a contact. Although the person in the Tuolumne hospital was living in Mammoth Lakes and acquired the infection here, it will be technically counted as a case in Merced or Tuolumne.

The Mono County Health Department has initiated contact tracing for each of these case-patients. People found to have been in close contact will be asked to quarantine themselves and monitor for symptoms.

While three new cases is alarming, it is also expected. Accelerating numbers of recognized and suspected infections demonstrate more clearly than ever that we are not immune from the epidemic affecting the rest of the world.

“We are somewhat reassured that the “Stay At Home” Order is in effect, but it is simply too soon to see any results,” says Tom Boo, Public Health Officer for Mono County. “We hope, and do anticipate, that new cases will come at a slower rate in the coming weeks.”

Dr. Boo further implores the community to continue, to double down in, practicing social, or as some are calling it, physical distancing.

“We face an extremely serious situation and fervently hope that all our efforts to promote distancing, from simple recommendations to the California “Stay At Home” Order to restrictions on hotels, motels, VRBOs and campgrounds, will reduce the impact on our community, especially elderly and medically vulnerable adults, who have higher rates of severe disease.”

Please be reminded that the number of positive tests in Mono County, as in the rest of the country, poorly reflects the extent of the virus’ spread because of overwhelmed laboratories. At the request of the state we will be doing less testing for the time being, not more. At this time testing will be largely limited to people requiring hospitalization. Therefore, the number of people who have severe disease, requiring hospitalization seems the best indicator to follow.

We do not know with any confidence the percentage of people with COVID-19 disease who develop severe disease, but the state health department and others are using a working estimate of 5-10%. That means that for every severe case we find there are probably 10-20 others we have not detected. The current number of confirmed cases requiring hospitalization in Mammoth Lakes and the surrounding area is four (4).

The doubling time for this virus appears to be between 4 and 6 days under normal circumstances. We hope that it will be longer with good social distancing. The California Department of Public Health believes that current measures will decrease transmission by 30-70%.

The pandemic is here and it poses an immediate threat to our community, especially vulnerable people and our hospitals. We are urgently trying to avoid replicating in California the terrible scenes from Italy and Wuhan City of hospitals unable to provide care to those who need it, and many deaths.

Every one of us has a responsibility to reduce the spread of this virus. Please comply with California’s order to “Stay At Home” except for essential activities.

*Please utilize the resources below for local information about the coronavirus.*

Call: 211 | Website: [MonoHealth.com/Coronavirus](https://www.monohealth.com/coronavirus) | [Facebook.com/MonoHealthDepartment](https://www.facebook.com/MonoHealthDepartment)  
[Instagram.com/MonoCountyHealthDepartment](https://www.instagram.com/MonoCountyHealthDepartment) | [Twitter.com/CountyMono](https://twitter.com/CountyMono)

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